

## History 422: Lecture 5

[Professor Hirt]: At the end of the last lesson, lesson 4 we talked about the tragedy at Waiilatpu, where the Cayuse Indians attacked and killed the two missionaries Marcus and Narcissa Whitman and I mentioned that this led into a series of wars and conflict that lasted on and off for several decades. From the time of the Whitman Tragedy in 1847 up to the 1870's relationships between the Indians and the new immigrants, the European Americans, deteriorated significantly. Tensions, mainly over lands and resources, access to resources, led to conflicts and eventual warfare. The Indians won a number of battles at this time but essentially they lost every important war over the long run in the late nineteenth century. Indians saw white advances in the 1840's, 50's, and 60's as a threat to their lands and their lives. They correctly perceived this. And they offered armed resistance whenever reasonable negotiations failed. Whites on the other hands saw Indians as obstacles to progress and civilization, as remnants of a primitive past that would have to adapt, step aside, or die. The merging euro American political order in the Northwest defined Indians not as an essential part of the social fabric of their society but rather as a problem, Indians were a problem, to be dealt with. In fact Government Indian Affairs for the U.S. government were managed by the war department, rather than by a separate Bureau of Indian Affairs as we have in the twentieth century. In the mid nineteenth century the European American resolution of the Indian problem was to negotiate treaties confining Indians to reservations and then to open the lands made available. To open up the lands made available to white settlers. This was done all over the west for the purposes of promoting white settlement and reducing if possible the military costs for protecting settlers from Indians reprisals. In the northwest killing of the Whitman's fueled non-Indian cries for revenge of the massacre and an aggressive settlement of this so-called Indian problem. In response to the deaths at Waiilatpu white settlers sent a peace mission and a military campaign. Unfortunately the military contingent, the Oregon Militia led by a man named Colonel Gilliam, who hated Indians and had no interest in the peace negotiations, which in fact he tried to sabotage very directly. He led the militia to successful attacks on the Cayuse and rather than stop there he went on harassing and attacking the Palouse Indians because he believed they were allies and that the Palouse were hiding the Cayuse. As a result the Palouse who had nothing to do with the Whitman event were dragged into the war. Unfortunately for the whites this time the Palouse Indians turned things around by running Colonel Gilliam's troops out of their territory and onto a long and embarrassing retreat up the Takanon River over the blue mountain foothills where they were chased all the way back Waiilatpu. This only enflamed white passions further and increased calls for a settlement of the Indian problem. Treaty negotiations began in the expansive Oregon territory in the late 1840's and continuing in the early 1850's with most efforts focusing on the Willamette valley where the white population was concentrated. In 1853 the Oregon territory broke in two with the creation of Washington's territory north of the Columbia River. A military man, Isaac Stevens was appointed governor of the new territory and its head of Indian affairs, he was also the chief surveyor for the transcontinental railroad across the mountains and into the

Pacific Northwest. Stevens believed he was an agent for progress and that Indians were frankly in the way. He had a vision for Washington Territory and he intended to get there by the shortest route possible. I have a very brief quote for you from Isaac Stevens when he first arrived in the Washington territory, got off the train, and was welcomed by the local people and this was among the first things they had to say to them. Pay attention because this is a view of his vision for Washington territory. He said, "I have come here not as an official for mere station but as a citizen as well as your chief majesty to do my part towards the development of the resources of this country. From your hands an imperial domain will descend to our children and power accedes to the country and all, too, in the cause of humanity and freedom." Here he is saying I am not an outsider, I'm a citizen of the territory of Washington like the rest of you but I am your chief magistrate and my chief concern is to develop the resources of this country. That is for the white population, he's speaking to white population. He also said that this vision of his, this development of resources for the benefit of the white population, would lead to a great empire in the northwest and that empire would then devolve to the children of those standing their listening to him, that day their descendants would have an empire in the northwest of wealth and power. This would all be done in the name of humanity and freedom. Beautiful vision in a sense, if we step out of that social structure and take a look at what is happening from the Indians point of view, things looked very different. The Indians saw their world changing dramatically in the 1850's and not for the better. They were losing lands and resources, their political power was going away and the newcomers seemed little concerned about freedom for Indians or willing to acknowledge the humanity of native inhabitants. One of Isaac Stevens' first tasks on his march to Manifest Destiny was to get Indians on reservations, and to open up the rest of the lands for white settlement. In 1854 after only a year in the territory he initiated a number of treaties in the Puget Sound area that concluded in 1855. Then he moved on to eastern Washington to negotiate with the interior tribes including the Yakima's, the Palouse, the Cayuse, the Nez Perce, and there is some others. This was the treaty of Walla Walla concluded in May of 1855, and we can come back to that in a moment. Now the general character of the treaties can be understood by taking a look at one of them, the medicine creek treaty dealing with the southern Puget sound region, and I have a text here I will be reading to you again from the speech that Isaac Stevens made at the start of medicine creek treaty negotiations. This is his introduction after calling all the Indians together saying we need to talk, and settle some problems here. Would you meet me at such a place at such a time? Send your elders, people who can speak for your tribe, we will come to terms. When he arrived, this is part of his introductory speech, now as I read this I want you to imagine first and I want you to try and pretend that you're both sides of these treaty negotiations. Imagine you're an Indian, hearing these words from Isaac Stevens and of course these are being translated from English into Chinook Jargon, and then translated from Chinook by other Indian translators into the individual dialects of the Indians visiting. So this is a double translation. Imagining being an Indian in this translation, how would you feel hearing these words? Imagine yourself, Isaac Stevens trying to sell Indians gathered before him on the idea of giving up your lands and retiring to a small part of land, a reservation. How you of would made this argument if

you were Stevens yourself? Here's how he opened the treaty negotiations. He told the Indians that this would be a day of peace and friendship between you and the whites for all time to come. You are about to be paid for your lands and the great father has sent me today to treat with you concerning the payment. We went through this country last year, learned of your numbers, and we saw your wants. We felt much for you and we went to the great father to tell him what we had seen. That great father felt for his children. He pitied and he has sent me here today to express those feelings and to make a treaty for your benefit. The great father has many white children who come here: some to build mills, some to make farms, and some to fish and the great Father wishes you to have homes, pasture for your horses, and fishing places. He wishes you to learn to farm and your children to go to a good school, and he now wants me to make a bargain with you in which you will sell your lands and in return you will be provided with all these things. You will have certain lands set apart for your homes and you will receive yearly payments of blankets, axes, etc. All of this is written down in this paper that will be read to you. If it is good, you will sign it and I will send it to the great father. Now that speech was made at medicine creek, and in two days' time, just two days of negotiations, with a language and cultural barrier that I mentioned earlier, some loose translations of these words. Stevens got the assembled tribes, including the Nisqually's and the Puyallup's to seed two and a half million acres of their lands around southern Puget Sound in exchange for three small reservations totaling less than four thousand acres. Now speculation over how Stevens got them to agree to this treaty and sign this treaty and how he got the Indians to sign the three other treaties in the territory of Washington in the following months which totaled a 64 million acre session of Indian lands to the U.S. government. How he got them to sign is a question occupied by many historians' attentions over the last century, the answer is complex but there are a few key points. First Steven's behavior was an important element: authoritarian and inflexible. He was very certain that these treaties would go forward and he told them in no uncertain terms that an agreement must be made and that there was very little leeway and that there had to be a signature or there would be blood. He was pushy, authoritarian, demanding, and told the Indians they really had no choice. If there were resistance among the tribes, he would negotiate. He told them they had no choice in the matter. They had to accept some treaty or there would be warfare. This led many Indians in the treaty of negotiations to feel that they really did have no choice and often they signed to conciliate Stevens. There were a number of Indians who did mention afterwards. Said they signed as a mark of friendship. They weren't really given a choice. They were asked if they were interested in peace and of course they were so their signature was a sign of friendship. They were willingly and knowingly signing away lands for these treaty benefits. In many cases the Indians were also signing because they felt they had no choice. There was also a language barrier that caused some level of confusion. It was obvious that some Indians didn't know what the treaty would mean over the long haul. Even when people are signing contracts or negotiations in the English language don't know every word in a contract, you generally need some sort of expert to give you long and detailed explanations of what's in the contracts like this. Well there were no experts and there was a double language barrier there. This certainly created

some confusion and this cropped up a little later when Indians said that's not what we understood in the case of the treaty. A third point, treaty signers lacked authority to speak for entire tribe. An Indian who signed might just be signing for himself, indicating intent to try and convince his other tribe members of his tribe to go along with the negotiations. They didn't really have the formal authority to compel members of his band or tribe to conform to the elements of the treaty. In American law we have this system that says when a law is passed then there is a police power that forces everybody to conform to those laws. This is not the system the Indians had. They had a system of persuasion in essence, and when a signatory would sign the most they could do is go back and say here is what I have agreed to I think it's a good thing, I think we should all follow this, but other members of the tribe could disagree. Fourth point. Those Indians who were not interested in such negotiations, who did not want to give up their homelands, which refused to sell their lands either did not attend these treaty negotiations knowing they would not agree or were welcome. Or they walked out of the negotiations and they found out what Stevens was asking for. Or in some places they were replaced by Stevens with another negotiator who would compromise. A number of people who would have resisted were either not their or would have been pushed out. Fifth and this is a particularly important one. Stevens offered terms that made people think the deal was not all that bad. There were a number of key incentives written into these 1854-1855 Steven's treaties that were particularly important to the Indians. Let's go over those right now. First the Indians were told they would have at least a year, and in one treaty 2 years, before they had to move on to the new reservations. This would give them time to go back home and convince their families, friends, and relatives, and other members of the band of the value of this particular treaty and convince them to move on to the reservations. Give them time for transition. Whites were not supposed to be moving out to Indian lands until that one or two year grace period was over. In fact however Whites were encouraged to immediately move out on to the land after the treaties were signed and before they were even approved by congress in Washington D.C and this did cause many conflicts. A second incentive, the Indians were told they would get annual cash payments for 20 years. This was a pretty good deal. This sounded good to a number of signatory's. Again this would help make that transition period to a new lifestyle. Third, Indians were told they would get agricultural supplies to help them begin farming. Most Indians were not interested in farming so I am not sure how important this was to some of the Indians. Those that were Christianized in many cases began to internalize the value of moving from a hunting gathering lifestyle to a farming lifestyle because that was taught to be more civilized way of earning a living and closer to the Christian way of doing things. So there were some Indians who were interested in farming and technological college set up in the Puget Sound base and that was another incentive that looked pretty good. Fourth and this is most important, the treaties said that the Indians would retain the right to fish at all usual accustomed grounds and places, they also retained the right to hunt, and gather roots and berries and pasture their horses on all claimed lands. Think about this, the way the Indians made their living if they weren't settled was by hunting and gathering, pasturing horses, and fishing. When the treaty said they could retain their right to fish in all usual situations and in all lands that were not claimed

and settled by somebody else they could continue to hunt, and gather, and pasture their horses, back in the 1850's when there are hardly any settlers north of the Columbia River. This would have sounded like to the Indians like not a really significant change. Sure we will move on to the reservation and set some home villages there but if we get to go back to the places where we fish every year, and if we get to go and hunt and gather roots and berries and pasture our horses in our normal places where there aren't white settlers now then what's the big deal? And in exchange for this they are going to get peace and friendship, and of course those other incentives. This didn't look to bad in the 1850's to a lot of Indians. Unfortunately it didn't work out that way. Instead of peace war erupted in many parts of the northwest. The Walla Walla treaty was followed by Yakima war which is actually a series of military confrontations lasting from 1855 to 1858. For a little discuss for this period of conflict that immediately followed the Walla Walla treaty were going to go to an interview with Professor Kent Richards from Central Washington University.

Kent thanks for meeting with us here today, were standing at Fort Simcoe a little west of Yakima and Toppenish and I was wondering if you could tell us what is Fort Simcoe? How did it get here and why is it here?

[Professor Richards]: This is an army fort that was built in the late 1850's as a result of the so called Yakima war. It is at a spot that the Yakima's called Mool Mool which means bubbling water. Over here a couple hundred yards you can still see the spring bubbling up out of the ground. The rather ornate Victorian building we see behind us is really the child of the first commander Major Robert Garnett, who was a southern Virginia gentlemen and a WestPoint graduate. When he was put in charge of the Fort there was of course nothing here at this site situated at the base of the mountains. But he wanted to have something more in keeping with his home in Virginia. He went to a book of Gentleman's country home as it was published at the time, and he picked out this Victorian design, of he had a lot of disputes with the army to whether this was necessary or not but obviously he ultimately prevailed. Surprisingly, this building and the others associated with the fort were constructed within a two year period. Monumental undertaking considering that many of the materials that we see here were brought either from the east coast across Panama or around the horn to San Francisco then up to Portland. Up the Columbia River to Fort Dowell and then by horseback across the mountains over in the distance, about forty miles over a mountain trail from the Dowell to this point. All of this was done for a fort that lasted exactly three years from 1856 to 59 but it did good service for many years after that. It was turned over to the Indian agency and became the home of the superintendent of the Yakima Agency from the early 1860's down until 1923 when the agency was moved to Toppenish.

[Professor Hirt]: So were situated essentially about the middle of the Yakima reservation?

[Professor Richards]: Yes. Approximately so, to the east we have rains lands and irrigated lands. To the west we have mountain and timber lands. This is of course a very large reservation of about a million two hundred thousand acres.

[Professor Hirt]: Any reason it was situated in this spot at the foot of the mountains?

[Professor Richards]: Well the main reason at the time was to have a spot that would give the army the most mobility to move in whatever direction they need in case of trouble. There was good water here. It was flat. And it was as you suggested, in the center of things.

[Professor Hirt]: Now you mention trouble, what kind of trouble was brewing at the time that led to the creation of this Fort?

[Professor Richards]: Well this fort was built only a year after the treaty with the Yakima's was concluded at Fort Walla Walla. Hostilities resulting from misunderstandings from that treaty and the general fact of increasing white settlement came almost immediately thereafter. This was just a consequence of that, that this fort, Fort Simcoe, and a new establishment at Walla Walla were constructed.

[Professor Hirt]: What happened between 1856 when this fort was built in the midst of this trouble time and 1859 when they felt it was no longer so necessary and they could turn it over to the Indian agency? That three year period there must have been significant?

[Professor Richards]: Yes there was, there was almost continuous warfare that went on in a sporadic way. After the 1855-56 so called Yakima war there was a brief truce then in 1857 Colonel Edwards was involved in a fight and turned out to be a major defeat for the Army in Eastern Washington at present Rosalia. The next year in 1858 a major campaign was mounted against the hostile tribes in a pincer movement. One going out from Fort Walla Walla to the east and into the vicinity of the Steptoe fight and towards Spokane and the second under Major Garnett from this fort going north through the Kittitas Valley up to the present Wenatchee area into the Okanogan country and then into the east. The major battles took place near Spokane and Major Garnett and his men were not involved however they did fight some skirmishes along the way I think Garnett lost only one man in the Kittitas valley. A man who was killed by one of the other troops accidentally.

[Professor Hirt]: You have written of course a book on Isaac Stevens, a biography of the man. He was at the time in the 1850's the governor of the territory of Washington and the superintendent of Indian affairs. What were his roles or obligations or objectives of that capacity as governor and superintendent?

[Professor Richards]: It was often the case that the governorship at the time included a second very separate job that a superintendent of affairs for the territory. One of the reasons for this was it gave the man two salaries. One was very sufficient to support a family, particularly in the inflated price structure of a frontier location. In some ways this dual role made sense because in the early years very often much of what a governor was doing involved Indian affairs. And this is certainly true of Stevens. On the other hand there is a certain contradiction built in because the superintendent was supposed to act in the best interest of the native people. The governor was supposed to act in the best interest of the white population and the two were not necessarily the same. Stevens was a small man even by the standards of the time. Extremely intelligent, articulate, energetic, excessively energetic some of his subordinates said. He was always on the move, always driving his men and those who worked for him. One of Stevens' major responsibilities as governor superintendent was to conduct a series of Indian Treaties. This was not his idea although he certainly agreed that it had to be done. Time was of the essence. Settlers were moving in to the new territory and yet as the term went Indian Title had not been distinguished which was fixed government policy and one must say, and enlightened one, compared with the policies of most conquerors who were very sold that you must treat the conquered people with kindness or certainly not with any fine legal distinctions but it was a point of pride with the federal government that the native population had certain rights to the soil and they should be respected. There was something of an exception to this policy of extinguishing Indian rights before settlement in Washington territory and Oregon too, in that the donation land act was passed in 1850. Yes right, in Washington was still part of Oregon. Allowed settlers to take three hundred and twenty acres anywhere in those territories. Well obviously there was a contradiction between this act and the Indian policy that the government had always followed. So we can try to bring these in line, the need was to have Indian treaties as soon as possible.

[Professor Hirt]: Because in 1850, when the Oregon donation act was passed, there were no treaties ending any title to Indian land. So technically, the legal title of the lands acquired by settlers was in question.

[Professor Richards]: Anywhere they were settling in Washington was technically still Indian. The title to settlers moving into the area over the Oregon Trail. The other half of this equation is that it was necessary in order to do something for the natives, not to have them just pushed aside and made to decide from their lands but to have a fixed policy, provide them with reservations for government subsidies over a certain period of time until they could be assimilated into white society and become part of this melting pot and be indistinguishable from everyone else in the territory. Of course it didn't quite work that way but that was the plan, the goal.

[Professor Hirt]: Now I mentioned earlier that land and resources were at the basis of much of the conflict for these three decades of warfare in the 1850's, 60's, and 70's. Let's take a quick look at the Indian reservations that were established in the nineteenth century. There is a map in

your textbook. If you look on the west side of the cascades where most of the white settlers were and all the reservations are quite small in size. I mentioned in the medicine creek treaties, three reservations totaling over 4,000 acres. The area was highly desired by whites and for political purposes Isaac Stevens sought very small reservations for those people. There were other reasons why the Indians accepted small reservations there to, the abundance of natural resources and their dependence of fisheries resources was one of the reasons why they didn't need quite so much land. They didn't have such a hunter and gatherer lifestyle on the Westside. But take a look at the tribes on the east side of the cascades. Colville, Nez Perce, Yakima, Warm Springs, Klamath, and Fort Hall reservations all pretty large in size compared to what you see on the west side. Especially for the Nez Perce which had the largest reservation of them all. Those were the reservations as they stood at various points in the late nineteenth century. Somewhere between 1850's and 80's. These reservations as you know take up only a small portion of the Pacific Northwest. Just a percentage of the land base up there. So when I say they seeded 64 million acres of land, that's all the land that's not covered in those reservations. Now that's not how those reservations stand today. Continuing from the 1880's to 1934 there was a continuous shrinkage of Indian reservations all over the United States and not just in the northwest. Mainly as a result of the Dawes Allotment Act which you have learned also. Encouraged Indians become farmers and allotted 160 acre homesteads. Then determined that other reservation lands not claimed were surplus or excess. It opened them up for white settlement. Now some reservations in the Northwest were just subject to the Dawes Allotment Act and other reservation land was lost. Other reservations in the west that weren't favorable for white settlers didn't see a lot of Dawes Activity shrinking their reservations. Reservations in the northwest shrunk significantly. Across the nation as a whole between 1887 when the Dawes (1934) was appealed over 2/3's of the reservation land base was lost. That was a significant reduction over the tiny fragment the Indians got in the first place as the result of treaties. The Nez Perce reservation shrunk significantly, the Fort Hall Reservation shrunk significantly. The Coeur d'Alene was established later, it also shrunk significantly. The Colville reservation in north central Washington shrunk significantly, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. So the establishment of the reservations caused conflict but even after conflict did not end because in some cases in just the space of a couple of years, a reservation established by treaty was again taken by the whites who wanted more of it, the Nez Perce is one example. In the textbook you read, a whole litany is described of wars and skirmishes that occurred in 60's-70. That exemplifies this conflict over lands and natural resources. Let's briefly review a few of those. In 1851 to 1856 there were a series of sporadic wars in the Rogue River Country in Oregon between Indians and white farmers. It ended in 1856 with the defeat of the Indians and their complete removal from the Rogue River Valley. In 1855, right after the Walla Walla treaty gold was discovered in the upper Columbia and miners trespassed across the Yakima reservation and other Indian lands in the plateau area in order to get at the gold. This was not only trespassing on reservations that were established in the treaty but as you remember the Indians didn't even have to move in the treaty. They still had jurisdiction over the territory for at least a year before they would move to the



reservations. These miners were not only trespassing but also on land still under control by the Indians. Well the Yakima's protested and nothing happened as a result of their protests so a few Yakima's ended up killing a few of the minors and causing problems that the military then took care of. It resulted in the defeat of probably the most important plateau chief at the time. His defeat at the hands of the military and of course the minors rights being protected over the Indians in the long run. In 1858 a coalition of plateau tribes, with the exception of the Nez Perce, rose up to expel a military expedition by Colonel Steptoe. This was an unusual battle because as I said it was a coalition of plateau tribes. It was fairly rare for plateau tribes to band together to repel whites or army contingents. This was one of the problems for the Indians in maintaining their sovereignty and their control over their lands. They had a difficult time uniting for the purpose of defending their collected lands. The whites had little trouble in comparison banding together against the Indians. Whereas the Indians, it was difficult and unusual for them to work together in a coalition. They were often fighting against each other. With one Indian serving as a scout for the army contingent against another tribe. They would work against each other to divide and conquer. So as I was saying in 1858 tribes rose up to repel this expedition by Colonel Steptoe. They defeated Steptoe; it was a very embarrassing defeat. He went on this long retreat, escaped, at least some of his men. It was a long retreat back to fort Walla Walla. This is very much an embarrassment; a longer army detachment under General Wright came out to the northwest and went on to a fairly brutal campaign suppressing all of the tribes that engaged in this Steptoe battle. In the end 24 chiefs were hanged as a result of the battle. In 1872 in South Eastern Oregon, a tribe rose up against whites beginning to settle on their lands. There were conflicts between farmers and Indians. The end result of that conflict was the removal and defeat of the Modoc Indians. Litany is sort of a pattern here becoming clear I hope. The Nez Perce Indians who did not engage in the Steptoe battle and were satisfied in the treaty they got. The Nez Perce reservation was fairly large and established in 1855. They were reasonably satisfied with their negotiation. In 1863, eight years after the negotiations, Gold was discovered in the Clearwater valley. Whites began trespassing on the Indian reservation. Conflicts developed, but what was the resolution for the territorial government. Not to get the miners out of there, the resolution was to get the Indians to accept a shrunken reservation. So they came back in 1863 and asked the Indians to reduce their boundaries by ninety percent. They drew a boundary that contained about ten percent of the original reservation. They got a number of the Nez Perce who lived in the Area that was included to sign this treaty in 1863. A significant percentage who lived outside the boundaries said they would not sign, including the white bird tribe in the lower Salmon River and of course the Chief Joseph tribe in the Wailau Valley in Oregon. Settlers began moving into the Wailau valley in the 1860's and 70's and wanted the Nez Perce Indians to be moved off to that shrunken reservation in the Clearwater valley and so conflicts developed between the Wailau band and white settlers moving in. As a result the U.S. government got involved. They took a look at the situation, and President Grant said yes indeed these Indians are not signers of that 1863 reservation; they are not covered by it and were going to give them a reservation in the Wailau valley, they deserve it, it's their land and that's what they should have.

Well whites protested and a fairly short time later the U.S. government gave up that agreement and told the Wailau band to move up to the new reservation. There was some resistance and a long epic struggle when the Chief Joseph band got in trouble with the Army. The army went after them and they fled across the bitter roots of Montana and northwest Wyoming and went across Yellowstone and headed up to Canada for refuge and didn't quite make it, they were defeated right before they got there. It's quite dramatic. That was 1877. Finally a small band of Bannock Indians in 1878 got in trouble, friction with settlers again in south central Idaho. End result of that battle, the U.S. government reduced the Fort Hall reservation by seventy five percent. Confining the Indians to an even smaller reservation and opening the land to white settlers. I mentioned early the Steptoe campaign which was a defeat for the government and was a great victory for the plateau tribes, including the Coeur D'Alene's, the Yakima's, the Palouse's, the Colville's, the Spokane's etc. There is a celebration of this particular Steptoe battle that's been taking place since about the mid 1990's on the Coeur D'Alene reservation sponsored by one family in particular on Memorial Day each year. They meet at the Indian agency in Plummer, Idaho. A group of them ride on horses from Plummer agency to the Steptoe battle field and have an encampment and a celebration there. This Memorial Day ride is in one sense a celebration of the victory over Steptoe and his soldiers but more importantly this Steptoe ride celebrates the memory of that battle. The past these Indians who are still living in this area. The memory of the battle where a half a dozen tribes fought together for their lands, lives, and liberty. It's also a celebration of the present as you will see. In 1996 Memorial Day we were invited to videotape a portion of the ride. The Coeur D'Alene's, Palouse's, Nez Perce's, Yakima's, and even some whites were all on that ride. Men and women together participated. We have a few segments of tape from that ride and an interview with one of the organizers of the Steptoe Ride. We will go to that now.

[Cliff Sijohn]: I want all of you when we are riding to pray. Last year we had hard luck, riders getting bucked off. It has already started this morning. We lost a horse last year, it had to be killed. He gave up his life for this ride. Then we lost one of our own family the day that we arrived at camp. It's important that you all pray when you ride. Remember you're riding your horse, take care of them, these are your brothers, these are spiritual horses, that are making this ride and they are your brothers. My sisters and my wife stayed up late last night fixing some things for you. She's handing you a little benison bag. You get up on top of the mountain, cut a little piece of your hair and put it in there. We're going to tie those on a tree in a bundle. For your family, for the ones you're riding for, for the old people, for the warriors who died in the battle, for the soldiers who died in this battle. Put it deep in your pocket. Don't be careless with it. Good luck. Thank you brothers and sisters.

This is our third year here. We began to really organize it the year before that. This is in the making as a result of a vision from my son, his name is Talking Eagle. Talking Eagle is who had this vision, he could hear the horses in the sweat house, he could see these horses, riders, and on

each side of these riders, his brothers and his sisters and myself, and on each side of them he could see these old warriors and in a shadowy form riding along side us. As a result of those things we saw a vision of a victor which was part of our family. The victor was killed at the battle with the soldiers here just over these hills. He was a Coeur D'Alene Indian person, he was a *Schitsu'umsh*, and he was a warrior. Coeur D'Alene is a term the French gave our people because of our trading capabilities, we were sharp-hearted, hearts of an al, and hardened because we always traded up, never traded down. This year a musket might be five beavers. Next year that same musket would get four beavers. Those kinds of thing never give in. Coeur D'Alene, we call ourselves [Coeur D'Alene Indian name] people, which is the "discovering ones." We discover things. But it was during this vision that he saw and we began to talk about it with my father, with him it was before his boy was born. When his son was born he named his son Victor. Victor was somebody from our family who had taken a Christian name from the Black Robes and he was a leader of young men and was killed in this battle. That's the significant beginning of this. It was in essence a continuation of us and perpetuating us as an Indian people through a vision form that Victor appeared to him and he later named his boy as memorializing all of those people, even the soldiers who fought here. As you can see in our ride we have white people that ride with us at the end and help us, our neighbors, and our friends, recognizing that our ride memorializes warriors from the Nez Perce, the Nimipoo, the Spokane Tribe called the *Spo'chane*, the Coeur D'Alene's called *Schitsu'umsh* and the Palouse Indians who are the *Pa'Louse*. Who all fought for their country here to defend this whole country that was theirs, their way of life, that had been given to them by the creator in the same form, in the vision form, this is where you will be, this is where you will hunt and fish, this is for your children who will walk this earth. This will belong to you.

We set this camp up and listen to the camp; we listen to the things happening. It may seem like everything is in disarray. Little children walking, little kids here, laughter over here, men talking over here. This has not change for a thousand years. Since time and memorial which was here and which you see has been the way our people have lived. The only thing is we are a little more modern Indian people as you can hear: vehicles starting here, we still have our modern ways, look towards education, wood framed buildings that we live in now. But we retain our language and our tradition and our culture as a people. We have never given that up. We may have become a captured people and our land and our holdings taken away, and yet we're still here as a people. The Crier now comes to announce to these riders that the sweat house is ready: they'll go sweat; they'll go pray, and go seek visions of strength and power. So the history of the Pacific Northwest you see it, its living in our eyes and in our minds, and in our songs. But it is a history that has only been written and captured by those who conquered us. Very very seldom do you have a chance to hear from our own people our own history. Those of you who hear these words and watch this from where ever you come. Where ever you were created from, your creator gave you life, and you studied hard, you married, you have your own life now and yet you listen to these words because a creator has brought you into this classroom, or into this setting where you

are watching this and hearing it, and you're here. The creator has brought you here to us. Our trails have crossed; all these people here were born somewhere. 30 years ago, 50 years ago, 25 years ago, 5 years ago, 3 years ago, the creator created them and their trails have all come here to this meadow for this reason to hear things and to witness. I think if you who are listening to his are studying other peoples, maybe your studying the inner people, get a taste of this, go beyond just listening and to being in a classroom, go beyond that and come here, come out and seek Indian people, sit there with them, learn from them. Mold it into your life, take the good things you think you can use and go forward with your own families. That is the true hard talk of the Coeur D'Alene Indian people, of the *Schitsu'umsh*: the discovering ones. That is what I leave with you this evening, and as we say in our language, (Salish words), which means: "I still my voice on this matter." The last vision I want you to see. Get your brother and bring your brother out here. We listen to the words; listen to the talk, and murmurs that will go on through the night. This family putting up a teepee so this evening they can sleep. This is Victor, this is the one who walks this earth now, this is the one who we hear his voice, his talk, because he came from the vision, this young man and he walks among us today. So this today a true heart talk, true heart. This is our true heart today, him and all these little ones that are all around here watching and learning. We still our voice.